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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2273 (2016) of 15 March 2016. It covers major political and security developments in Libya, provides an overview of the human rights and humanitarian situation in the country, and outlines the activities of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) since the issuance of my report of 25 February 2016 (S/2016/182).

II. Political and security-related developments

2. Libyan political actors continued to make progress, despite some delays, in implementing the Libyan Political Agreement, signed on 17 December 2015 in Skhirat, Morocco. United Nations efforts were focused on supporting those implementation efforts. In an important first step towards a peaceful and orderly handover of executive authority, the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord installed itself in Tripoli on 30 March. The relatively calm security situation, as well as statements of support by municipal councils in the greater Tripoli area and other stakeholders, signalled broad popular support for its arrival. The Presidency Council asked the United Nations to rapidly establish a presence in Tripoli and encouraged Member States to re-establish diplomatic missions in support of the political process. UNSMIL continued to support the efforts of members of the House of Representatives to conduct a formal vote on the composition of the proposed Government of National Accord and to amend the Constitutional Declaration, in accordance with the Libyan Political Agreement.

3. Nonetheless, significant work was still required to broaden the base of support for the implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement and support the new transitional institutions in carrying out their duties. Despite the relative calm prevailing in Tripoli following the arrival of the Presidency Council, a number of political actors continued to oppose the implementation of the Agreement. In addition, the security situation remained fragile both in the capital and across the country. The leadership of the General National Congress and its executive, which was increasingly isolated following the move by a majority of Congress members, on 5 April, to constitute the State Council, criticized the arrival of the Presidency Council. Meanwhile, Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) affiliates made new

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attempts to expand their reach, and armed conflict in Benghazi and elsewhere added to the plight of the civilian population.

Implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement

4. During the reporting period, the Presidency Council and political stakeholders continued their efforts to implement the Libyan Political Agreement, including steps towards the establishment of a Government of National Accord supported by security arrangements, in order to end armed conflict and unify divided governance structures. In the weeks following its 23 February session, which had failed to produce a vote on the proposed Cabinet for the Government of National Accord, leading members to sign a statement of support for the Cabinet, the House of Representatives was not able to achieve the quorum needed to convene a new session. Consequently, the United Nations facilitated a meeting of members of the Libyan political dialogue in Tunis, on 10 March. Dialogue members underscored the inherent competence of the House of Representatives to endorse the proposed Government of National Accord and called on the House to uphold its responsibilities with respect to the implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement. At the same time, dialogue members urged the Presidency Council to rapidly begin working from Tripoli and called on all public bodies, including financial institutions, to put in place all the arrangements necessary for an immediate, orderly and peaceful handover of executive authority.

5. The Presidency Council subsequently announced, on 12 March, that it would initiate the work of the Government of National Accord. Seven of the nine Presidency Council members arrived in Tripoli, on 30 March, by sea. Their arrival was facilitated by the Temporary Security Committee, which had established security arrangements involving army, navy and police forces and had engaged in liaison with armed groups. UNSMIL offered advisory support to the Committee and the Presidency Council in that regard.

6. Having temporarily installed itself at the naval base in central Tripoli, the Presidency Council proceeded to meet with a number of stakeholders, including representatives of municipalities, public institutions and civil society, and to issue executive decisions. On 3 April, the Presidency Council issued decisions on establishing control over state finances, deciding to temporarily freeze the accounts of public entities and to establish a committee to oversee the allocation of funds. My Special Representative for Libya met with the Presidency Council in Tripoli on 5 and 17 April to discuss options and priorities with respect to United Nations support for the restarted transition process.

7. UNSMIL continued to engage with the leadership and members of the House of Representatives on the convening of a session of the House to officially endorse the Government of National Accord and amend the Constitutional Declaration. Following failed attempts to convene sessions in Tobruk on 18, 19 and 21 April, members of the House who supported the Government of National Accord resorted to signing a statement of support for the Cabinet and calling for the House to convene outside Tobruk to swear in the Government.

8. The leadership of the Tripoli-based "Government of National Salvation", meanwhile, continued to oppose the arrival of the Presidency Council, declaring a state of emergency prior to the Council's arrival in Tripoli and subsequently issuing contradictory statements on whether it was ready to transfer authority. Nonetheless,

the Presidency Council proceeded to take control of several government ministries. Separately, on 29 March, the interim Government based in the east of the country announced that it would step down only when the Government of National Accord was formally endorsed by the House of Representatives.

9. Meanwhile, a majority of the membership of the General National Congress in Tripoli convened consultative meetings in March on establishing the State Council, the third main body emanating from the Libyan Political Agreement. On 5 April, they voted to amend the Constitutional Declaration and proceeded to reconstitute themselves as the State Council. Members of the House of Representatives criticized the move by the Congress to adopt the amendment to the Declaration as encroaching on their prerogatives and questioned the legality of convening the State Council.

Regional and international engagement

10. Neighbouring countries continued to play an important role in supporting the implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement. My Special Representative attended the meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the neighbouring countries of Libya held in Tunisia on 22 March. The neighbours welcomed the participation of the Presidency Council as the representative of Libya at the meeting. On 24 March, my Special Representative attended the fifth meeting of ministers of defence of the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States, held in Egypt. The meeting provided an opportunity to consider the regional security aspects of the instability in Libya.

11. Broader regional and international engagement also continued to provide critical support for the political process. My Special Representative continued to work closely with representatives of the African Union, the European Union and the League of Arab States. This cooperation helped to ensure coordinated and united international support for the implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement.

Situation in the west

12. The security situation in the capital and its environs remained largely calm after the arrival in Tripoli of the Presidency Council. The Presidency Council took its temporary seat at the naval base in downtown Tripoli, protected by Libyan army and police units under the command of the Temporary Security Committee, as well as by armed groups nominally subordinate to the Ministry of the Interior. Nonetheless, a few minor clashes took place between security forces and opposing armed groups. In one such incident, on the day of its arrival, members of one group briefly occupied Martyrs' Square in central Tripoli, but quickly withdrew when confronted by forces supportive of the Presidency Council. On 3 April, clashes erupted around the offices of the al-Nabaa television station, a media outlet largely perceived as opposed to the Libyan Political Agreement.

13. Despite the relative calm, tensions continued in the capital. Tripoli remained controlled by more than 40 rival armed groups originating from the capital and nearby cities and areas. On 28 March, clashes erupted in the western Gorji neighbourhood of Tripoli between a local armed group and the Amazigh-dominated National Mobile Force after one of its members had been killed. On 16 April, a subsequent clash, in central Tripoli in the vicinity of the home of a Presidency Council member and also involving the National Mobile Force, saw two of the Force's members killed.

14. While the security situation in the wider western region remained fragile, local ceasefire arrangements proved sufficiently resilient to prevent incidents from escalating. However, on 23 March, fighting broke out between rival armed groups from Warshafanah and Zawiyah, resulting in at least 15 fatalities. Following several days of clashes, mediation by tribal elders and other armed groups put an end to the fighting.

Situation in the east

15. Armed confrontations in eastern Libya continued during the reporting period. In Benghazi, fighting escalated between forces loyal to General Khalifa Haftar and the Benghazi Revolutionaries Shura Council, a coalition of Islamist armed groups, and ISIL. On 20 February, General Haftar launched a new military offensive with the stated objective of evicting the Shura Council and its allies from the city. Forces loyal to General Haftar initially made significant territorial gains, dislodging the Shura Council and ISIL from the central Leithi and eastern Buatni areas, as well as from much of the southern Hawari neighbourhood. This was the first time since late 2014 that General Haftar's forces had made significant progress on the ground, aided by augmented recruitment and the supply of additional weaponry and ammunition.

16. Following three weeks of intense clashes, fighting in Benghazi subsided in mid-March and continued at a lower level. Despite incurring significant losses, the Benghazi Revolutionaries Shura Council and its allies, bolstered by additional weapons, ammunition and fighters transported by sea from its allies in western Libya, retained control of and defended its positions in the southern Qar Younis, Qawarsha and Qanfouda areas and the northern Sabri area. The northern Sabri area is an ISIL stronghold. In mid-April, General Haftar's forces, supported by continued air strikes, acquired control of the cement factory in the Hawari area and of the University of Benghazi in Qar Younis, two positions long held by the Shura Council.

17. In Derna, ISIL withdrew from its last positions in neighbourhood No. 400 and the Fata'ih area south of the city, following clashes in mid-April with the Derna Mujaheddin Shura Council and allied army elements. The Shura Council subsequently announced that the city had been cleared of the presence of ISIL.

Situation in the south

18. In Awbari, the implementation of a ceasefire agreement reached on 22 November in Qatar between representatives of the Tuareg and Tebu communities proceeded without any major incidents during the reporting period. In accordance with the agreement, all armed groups withdrew from the city and 44 detainees were released following an exchange of prisoners. The reopening of Awbari airport and the main route connecting Awbari with the north-east facilitated the flow of goods and the movement of people, in addition to a gradual stabilization of the overall situation.

19. In Sabha, intercommunal tensions continued to have an impact on the overall security situation, with cases of revenge killings reported between the Awlad Sulayman community, on the one hand, and the Qadhadhfa and Tebu communities, on the other.

20. In Kufrah, in the south-east, a partial lifting of the siege that Zway armed militias had laid to the Tebu neighbourhoods contributed to a slightly improved security situation.

ISIL presence

21. During the reporting period, ISIL continued to maintain control of the coastal area around Sirte, in central Libya, effectively controlling a strip of approximately 250 km. ISIL also continued to control a small area in Benghazi, surrounded, however, by opposing local forces. In the west, ISIL was weakened after having lost its main regional base, in Sabratha. In the east, ISIL lost what had been its first Libyan base, in Derna.

22. The blow to ISIL in Sabratha came in the wake of clashes that had occurred in late February between its fighters and local armed groups and security forces, triggered by a local arrest operation after which ISIL briefly occupied police and municipal buildings in the centre of the city, killing 17 people. ISIL fighters in the area, estimated at some 250 in number, many of them Tunisian nationals, were subsequently defeated after several days of fighting. Two Italian nationals held hostage by ISIL were freed during the clashes, while two others were killed.

23. In apparent efforts to consolidate its control over the local population, ISIL reportedly imposed a set of new regulations, including additional tax payments and compulsory religious lessons for males between 20 and 50 years of age. ISIL also continued carrying out executions and cruel corporal punishment.

24. From its bases in Sirte and Nawfaliyah, ISIL continued to raid adjacent southern, western and eastern areas, seeking spoils and revenues as well as an expansion of its area of control. On 9 March, ISIL attacked a checkpoint south of Gharyan, almost 300 km east of Sirte, abducting one policeman. This prompted clashes with armed groups from Zintan and Awlad Abu Seif tribesmen, which resulted in a number of casualties. Also on 9 March, ISIL attacked a checkpoint in Abu Qurayn, some 110 km south of Misrata, resulting in the death of four Misratan fighters.

25. Further towards the east and the south, on 14 March, ISIL attacked the Sarir power station close to the Sarir oilfield, some 350 km south of Ajdabiya, clashing with local Petroleum Facilities Guard units. On 2 April, ISIL attacked the Al-Baida 47 oilfield, some 250 km south of Ras Lanuf. Days of fighting with local forces resulted in the deaths of five local fighters and injuries to seven. On 4 April, ISIL raided a checkpoint some 160 km south of Sirte, killing one soldier and injuring two. Local forces from Sukna and Hun later re-established control over the area, killing six ISIL fighters.

26. Libyan forces from Misrata continued air strikes against ISIL targets in and around Sirte. On 6 March, at least 15 ISIL fighters were reported killed in air strikes. Forces from Misrata and other towns in western Libya continued to control the road between Misrata and Waddan, blocking the advance of ISIL westward and southward, while the Petroleum Facilities Guard continued to hinder ISIL expansion eastwards. On 23 April, the Petroleum Facilities Guard intercepted a group of ISIL fighters south of Brega. Ensuing clashes resulted in casualties on both sides.

III. Constitution drafting process

27. After having considered a number of recommendations received following the publication of the first draft constitution on 6 October 2015, a 12-member committee of the Constitution Drafting Assembly produced and published a second

draft in early February. As with the first draft, key provisions proved controversial and reflected continued disagreements among members of the Constitution Drafting Assembly. These related primarily to the role of the second parliamentary chamber, the rights of women and minorities, the national capital, presidential elections, the judiciary, decentralization and local government.

28. In an attempt to help the Assembly make further progress towards consensus, the Government of Oman generously hosted 32 of the 56 Assembly members, including minority representatives, for a three-week retreat in Salalah beginning on 18 March. UNSMIL and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) helped to organize the retreat and provided senior international expertise to facilitate the discussions. Eleven Assembly members boycotted the discussions in Oman, having earlier raised objections to the two drafts of the constitution and to the manner in which the Assembly was conducting its work.

29. Consensus was reached on the outstanding issues among most members present in Salalah, including the Tuareg component. On 6 April, all Constitution Drafting Assembly members present except the two Tebu representatives signed a consensus document reflecting the agreed articles.

30. The Constitution Drafting Assembly reconvened a new session in al-Baida on 10 April to amend its bylaws, particularly with respect to quorum issues and procedures for voting on a new draft constitution. While some members of the Assembly continued their boycott of the process, a majority voted on 19 April in favour of a new draft constitution.

IV. Other activities of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya

A. Electoral support

31. During the reporting period, the United Nations electoral support team, managed jointly by UNSMIL and UNDP, continued to work with the High Commission for National Elections in planning activities focused primarily on strengthening the Commission's technical capacities. Those activities relate mainly to preparing for future electoral events and cultivating knowledge and awareness on electoral issues among key decision makers. The team continued to facilitate contacts between the Commission and its counterparts in the Arab region and to coordinate international electoral efforts. In addition, the team provided technical advice to the United Nations-facilitated discussions on the drafting of the constitution.

B. Human rights, transitional justice and the rule of law

32. All parties to the conflict in Libya continued to perpetrate violations of international human rights and humanitarian law and abuses of human rights, some of which may amount to war crimes, with civilians suffering the consequences of protracted fighting and abuses resulting from the breakdown of law and order. During the reporting period, UNSMIL documented unlawful killings; abductions; hostage-taking; enforced disappearances; torture; attacks on human rights defenders, journalists and bloggers; and possible indiscriminate attacks on civilians.

33. UNSMIL also supported the investigation mission of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights established pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 28/30. The resulting report,[1] presented to the Council in March, described a wide range of violations and abuses by all parties to the conflict and made a number of recommendations, focusing in particular on accountability and the re-establishment of the Libyan justice system.

34. During the reporting period, UNSMIL also launched a project to issue monthly statements on civilian casualties. The majority of cases documented by the Mission were a result of shelling and gunfire. Attacks were also documented on objects protected under international humanitarian law. In that regard, at least six civilians were killed or injured in hospitals. On 23 March, a nurse was injured by crossfire in the waiting room of the Benghazi Medical Centre, while on 24 March a nurse and her 2-year-old son were killed while sleeping in their apartment in the compound of the hospital in Zawiyah. Clashes that occurred between rival armed groups in the vicinity of the hospital in Sabha on 31 March and 3 April resulted in the deaths of three civilians, one hospital guard and one fighter.

35. The highest number of civilian casualties was recorded in Benghazi. Of major concern was the increasing number of casualties resulting from explosive remnants of war, particularly among internally displaced people, including children, who were returning to their homes. Civilians also reported deliberate attacks on their property by both the Benghazi Revolutionaries Shura Council and Operation Dignity, in particular the burning and looting of homes. A number of civilians remained trapped in affected areas in Benghazi, including the Qanfouda, Qawarsha and Marissa neighbourhoods. The failure by parties to the conflict to allow safe and voluntary evacuation had left those civilians at high risk. Three nationals of Bangladesh and one Pakistani national were shot dead on 25 March as they were attempting to flee from the Qawarsha neighbourhood.

36. In March, intensified fighting in Zawiyah led to the killing of five civilians, including three children. Hundreds of families had to flee their houses to seek refuge in safer areas. Several houses, properties and businesses were destroyed or damaged as a result of fighting or by armed groups targeting their opponents.

37. During the reporting period, UNSMIL also documented 18 executions of captives. On 20 March, following a ruling by a self-appointed Sharia court in Derna, the Derna Mujaheddin Shura Council executed eight men suspected of supporting groups affiliated with ISIL. On 24 March, armed groups from Warshafanah abducted six men from their homes in al-Tewibya before executing them. Their bodies showed signs of torture. In Sirte, between 25 and 28 March, groups affiliated with ISIL executed at least five men, reportedly for treason.

Abductions and torture

38. Armed groups across Libya continued to abduct civilians. Individuals were targeted on the basis of their family or tribal identity as well as political affiliations. Others were abducted for purposes of ransom or effecting prisoner exchanges.

39. Three children from a family in Surman, abducted in early December 2015, continued to be held. In another case, the body of an 11-year-old boy, showing signs

[1] A/HRC/31/CRP.3, available from the website of the Human Rights Council.

of torture, was found in Tripoli in late February after an armed group had abducted him. His family had reportedly failed to pay the requested ransom.

40. UNSMIL also documented cases involving deprivation of liberty and torture across the country, including in sections of the Mitiga detention facility in Tripoli, under the control of the Special Deterrence Force; in the Abu Salim detention facility; and in detention facilities under the control of other armed groups in Tripoli. Similar violations and abuses were also recorded in detention facilities in al-Baida, Bani Walid, Benghazi, Khoms, al-Marj, Warshafanah and Zintan.

41. Those in custody were frequently denied visits from family members and lawyers and subjected to torture or other ill treatment. UNSMIL documented four separate cases of deaths following abduction by armed groups, in Bani Walid, Khoms, Tripoli and Zintan. In each case, the bodies of the victims showed signs of torture. In the Tripoli case, the victim appeared to have been targeted on the basis of his ethnic and tribal identity. Armed groups from Misrata based in Khallat al-Farjan in Tripoli reportedly abducted a 26-year-old man from Tawergha on 21 March. His body, covered with bruises and contusions, was later found in the Tripoli morgue.

42. Armed groups have also targeted women. In Benghazi, a 65-year-old woman continues to be arbitrarily detained, as she has been for 11 months, because of her children's alleged links with the Benghazi Revolutionaries Shura Council. No charges have been brought against her.

Groups in vulnerable situations

43. Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees continue to face a range of abuses, including torture or other ill treatment, in places of detention operated by the Department for Combating Illegal Migration, or by armed groups. Often held in overcrowded cells without adequate fresh air, sanitation, bedding, food or medical care, many suffer beatings and endure forced labour.

44. Children continued to be subjected to unlawful killings, abductions and arbitrary detention, and also suffered as civilian casualties during hostilities. Children in detention were often held with adults, rather than separately as required under international human rights law. Women were frequently targeted by armed groups for abduction and arbitrary detention owing to the affiliations of their family members. Women held in detention were often held in facilities with no female prison guards.

45. Abductions and violent attacks continued against social activists during the reporting period. On 8 March, a political activist was abducted in Benghazi, interrogated and reportedly beaten before his release a week later. On 17 March, a prominent human rights defender, Abdul Basit Abu-Dahab, was assassinated in Derna by means of an improvised explosive device placed under his vehicle. The fate of three bloggers abducted in Benghazi on 28 March remains unknown. Separately in Tripoli, a blogger was abducted by two armed groups on 30 March and held for four days. His captors reportedly subjected him to torture, including by having a dog maul him.

46. On 30 March, 12 heavily armed men attacked the al-Nabaa television station. They threatened the staff, beat at least one staff member and demanded the closure of the station. On 3 April, a second attack on the station, involving explosives and gunfire, resulted in serious damage to its premises. It has since resumed broadcasting, however.

Transitional justice

47. As part of the efforts by the joint Misrata-Tawergha dialogue committee to implement the 18 December 2015 road map document, UNSMIL and UNDP supported committee members in meeting twice during the reporting period. Progress was made towards the completion of a non-technical survey to assess levels of contamination by mines and other explosive remnants of war in Tomina, Karzaz, al-Kararim and Tawergha. However, assessment work in Tawergha was suspended in early March after Misratan armed groups had refused to provide further security. A second meeting by the joint committee discussed good practices utilized under reparations programmes globally and began to address the details of the committee's own programme.

Judiciary and penal system

48. Twenty-four prisoners managed to escape from a prison facility in Zliten following a rocket attack on 16 March. They included criminal and conflict-related detainees, seven of whom were subsequently recaptured. Serious damage to the facility necessitated its closure and the transfer of the remaining detainees to Misrata.

49. On 1 April in Zawiyah, 4 detainees from the al-Nasr detention facility, which is run by the Department for Combating Illegal Migration, were shot dead and 20 others were injured following an apparent escape attempt. A guard was also injured. The case has illustrated the ongoing serious concern regarding the dire situation of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in Libya, including conditions relating to their treatment and prolonged detention.

50. Ongoing fighting and insecurity continued to impede court functions in Benghazi, Derna and Sirte.

C. Security sector

Support for Libyan planning for interim security arrangements

51. A key focus of UNSMIL engagement on security issues has been to support the Temporary Security Committee in planning for the implementation of the interim security arrangements outlined in the Libyan Political Agreement. Elements include a comprehensive action plan to facilitate the entry into Tripoli of the Presidency Council; international support for Libyan security institutions; and the promotion of a nationwide ceasefire, including in Benghazi.

52. Pursuant to its engagement strategy on interim security arrangements, UNSMIL, working alongside the Temporary Security Committee, consulted with a broad spectrum of Libyan security actors. Discussions were focused on, inter alia, establishing a code of conduct governing the behaviour of armed groups; mapping police and army units with capacity to provide protection to the Presidency Council and the Government of National Accord; and developing a concept for the establishment of a presidential guard. Following the arrival of the Presidency Council in Tripoli, UNSMIL provided it with strategic advice on command-and-control structures and on sequencing the implementation of the interim security arrangements.

53. In parallel, UNSMIL worked alongside the international community to develop options for international support for Libyan security institutions. In that regard, the Mission participated in a conference held in Rome on 15 March for discussions on possible future international training and mentoring of Libyan army and police, if requested by the Libyan authorities. UNSMIL will continue to support the Temporary Security Committee and the Presidency Council in efforts to develop a detailed list of critical needs to be shared with the international community for its immediate consideration.

54. A small team from UNSMIL carried out a number of visits to Tripoli in April to discuss with members of the Presidency Council and the Temporary Security Committee the requirements for the further development of the interim security arrangements in Tripoli. These included the introduction of a mechanism for monitoring the compliance of armed groups with their obligations under the Libyan Political Agreement and the development and implementation of a plan for the provision of security to key ministries and other strategic sites by regular police and army units.

Arms and ammunition management

55. As part of efforts to address the serious problem of unsecured weapons and ammunition across Libya and its impact on the Sahel region as a result of proliferation, the United Nations Mine Action Service finalized proposals on a framework document for arms and ammunition management in Libya, to be presented to the Government of National Accord for its consideration. During the reporting period, the Service also conducted a risk awareness training programme for Libyan women on small arms and light weapons.

D. Women's empowerment

56. UNSMIL continued to promote the role of women in the political process. On 10 March, the Mission organized an International Women's Day event that brought together more than 30 Libyan women and men to discuss women's advancement, in particular the role of women in promoting peace.

57. From 19 to 25 March, UNSMIL and UNDP jointly supported the participation of six Libyan women in the sixtieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held in New York. The Libyan participants represented the House of Representatives, the General National Congress, the political dialogue and civil society. In collaboration with the Netherlands and Switzerland, UNSMIL organized a Libyan side event on 23 March attended by more than 60 persons from Member State missions, the League of Arab States, the African Union and United Nations entities.

58. UNSMIL also continued to promote the inclusion of gender provisions in the draft constitution, including by facilitating meetings between Libyan women activists and members of the Constitution Drafting Assembly. Those meetings provided an opportunity for Libyan women to convey inputs, including on election quota systems and the right of Libyan women married to non-Libyans to transfer their nationality to their children.

E. Coordination of international assistance

59. The arrival of the Presidency Council in Tripoli provided renewed impetus for United Nations efforts on the coordination of international assistance to Libya. On 31 March, UNSMIL, in partnership with UNDP, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, convened the third Libyan Experts Development Cooperation Forum, in Tunis. Discussions were focused on means of addressing some of the urgent challenges facing Libya; the decline in the status of women and in their presence in public life; the strengthening of civil society; the radicalization of youth; and processes aimed at developing a national integrated development agenda for Libya.

60. On 12 April, the United Nations and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland convened a senior officials' meeting in Tunis to discuss international support for the Government of National Accord. At the meeting, agreement was reached on activating the proposed coordination structure for international assistance to Libya, which reflects the vision presented by the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord and establishes a mechanism for collaboration on the timely provision of international support based on national priorities. These include the restoration of security and stability; demobilization, disarmament and reintegration as a key medium-term priority; economic recovery, including strengthening the role of the private sector; inclusive governance at the national and local levels; and the restoration of basic services.

61. The Stabilization Facility for Libya project of UNDP was launched on 12 April in the presence of the Minister of Planning-designate of the Government of National Accord, a senior official of the Government of Germany and representatives of 47 other Member States and international organizations. The project is designed to support the Government of National Accord in broadening its base of support among the population through quick and tangible interventions. These include the rehabilitation of critical infrastructure, the restoration of key services at the municipal level, and enhanced engagement between the central Government and municipalities. Since the launch, pledging by Member States has amounted to $30 million, covering a period of two years.

62. In February, as part of efforts to strengthen the capacities of civil society organizations in support of the democratic transition of Libya, UNDP provided technical assistance to a conflict-sensitivity initiative aimed at establishing a Libyan "leadership group" to serve as a platform for shared conflict analysis that would inform United Nations and international community engagement in Libya on issues related to government functionality, recovery and post-conflict transition.

F. Humanitarian assistance

63. The Libya Humanitarian Response Plan continued to be severely underfunded. As a consequence, the humanitarian community remained unable to fully respond to needs in Libya. Launched in November 2015, the Plan had received only 18.2 per cent of the required funding as at 30 April, totalling $30 million. Of that amount, the Central Emergency Response Fund allocation accounted for $12 million, covering 12 projects. The second meeting of national and international humanitarian partners working in Libya was held in Tunis on 30 March, with discussions focused on gaps

and challenges in the implementation of the Humanitarian Response Plan, key coordination tools and the improvement of response through partnerships.

64. Figures from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) indicate that the number of internally displaced persons in Libya other than in Benghazi has reached 331,622, in addition to 150,362 returnees and 142,370 migrants. Official figures provided by Benghazi municipality put the number of internally displaced persons in the city at 180,000.

65. Despite funding shortfalls, United Nations agencies continued to provide urgent humanitarian relief and assistance during the reporting period. The World Food Programme provided food assistance to 59,100 people, mainly the internally displaced. The World Health Organization (WHO) supplied major consignments of medicines and life-saving supplies to al-Baida, Benghazi, Tripoli and Zliten. Trauma kits and emergency antiretroviral supplies were delivered on the basis of the needs and numbers provided by the Libyan Ministry of Health. In addition, WHO supplied five diarrheal diseases kits, 20 inter-agency emergency health kits and three trauma kits, benefiting some 27,000 critical patients. Antimalarial and antileishmanial drugs were supplied, and 10,000 blood bags were in the process of being shipped to Benghazi. In collaboration with WHO and the Ministry of Health, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) delivered 1.5 million doses of polio vaccine ahead of the vaccination campaign that began on 16 April, targeting more than 1.2 million children.

66. UNICEF supported the participation of 593 children in structured, sustained and community-based child protection and psychosocial support programmes implemented through fixed or mobile, child-friendly spaces. In addition, UNICEF-supported implementing partners distributed recreational kits to 453 children across Libya. Furthermore, in late February agreement was reached between UNICEF and the municipal council of Zintan to establish a joint steering committee to develop a comprehensive plan for the release, rehabilitation and reintegration of children involved in armed conflict.

67. As at 13 April, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had registered 237 additional refugees since late February, bringing the total number of registered refugees and asylum seekers to 37,000. Approximately 100,000 refugees and asylum seekers are estimated to be in Libya, half of them believed to be Syrian nationals, followed by Palestinians, Somalis, Sudanese, Eritreans and others. UNHCR partners continued to visit detention centres in and around Tripoli to provide medical assistance. More than 1,500 persons received medical consultations in March. In April, more than 750 people were rescued by the Libyan coast guard and disembarked in Zawiyah and Tripoli, where UNHCR partners provided assistance.

68. Between 26 February and 14 April, IOM recorded 15,082 migrants as having reached European shores by way of the central Mediterranean Sea corridor. A total of 735 migrants perished during the crossing. Separately, IOM facilitated the repatriation of 347 migrants to Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Togo. IOM successfully distributed 1,838 non-food item kits and 1,904 hygiene kits to migrants in detention centres and to others rescued at sea and being held at the Zawiyah and Abu Salim detention centres.

69. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) continued to implement its emergency response to the outbreak of avian influenza by strengthening veterinary services in Libya. FAO was also providing emergency assistance to the Libyan Agricultural Authority to deal with the growing problem posed by the spread of the red palm weevil outbreak.

70. In response to reported damage to and destruction of cultural heritage and illicit excavations in Libya, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), acting in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, continued to assist the Libyan Department of Antiquities in monitoring World Heritage sites through satellite imagery. UNESCO also assisted with the capacity development of Libyan cultural institutions on risk preparedness and security measures with respect to exposed and threatened sites and museums.

V. Deployment of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya and security arrangements

71. The total resources approved for UNSMIL for 2016 amount to $41,181,500. The budget provides for a staffing table of 195 posts and two United Nations Volunteer positions. In view of the security conditions in Libya, UNSMIL international staff remained deployed in Tunis, where the Mission is temporarily headquartered. As at 31 March, a total of 125 UNSMIL international staff, 3 government-provided personnel and 2 United Nations Volunteers were deployed in Tunis, with an additional 29 national staff in Libya. Furthermore, three international staff members and one General Service staff member were deployed at Headquarters and four at the Global Service Centre in Brindisi, Italy.

72. In its resolution 2273 (2016), the Security Council recognized the need for UNSMIL to re-establish its presence in Libya and the need to make necessary security arrangements to that effect, and requested me to report accordingly. Since 30 March, the Mission has established regular flights from Tunis to Tripoli and other cities in Libya. That has facilitated a steady in-country presence of UNSMIL staff focused primarily on supporting the Presidency Council as well as its Temporary Security Committee. While this work has been vital to supporting the Presidency Council and its efforts to establish its presence in the capital and attend to urgent matters of State, the Mission has been unable to re-establish its Tripoli office and permanently redeploy staff on the ground. That remains the case despite repeated requests by the Presidency Council for the immediate relocation of UNSMIL to Tripoli.

73. As noted above, the security situation on the ground remains largely unstable, with significant incidents linked to armed conflict and terrorism. In addition to launching a number of hit-and-run attacks on oil facilities in the central region, ISIL recently resorted to attacks involving improvised explosive devices and suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices. Criminal activity is also a significant source of concern, with incidents involving carjacking and kidnappings for ransom. That situation poses significant risks to the local population as well as to those from other areas who are present in Libya, and presents serious challenges for United Nations operations on the ground.

74. In my previous report, of 25 February 2016 (S/2016/182), I informed the Security Council of the deployment of a needs assessment mission to UNSMIL from 11 to 16 January. It recommended specific and necessary security arrangements to permit the safe and secure re-establishment of a United Nations presence in Tripoli. Of priority is the deployment of a sizeable armed United Nations security team, as a precondition for the permanent return to Tripoli of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, other United Nations senior officials and their teams. The UNSMIL premises in Tripoli will require security and infrastructure upgrades and, accordingly, increased human resources with respect to mission support functions. In addition, UNSMIL is reorganizing its security apparatus with a view to maximizing the efficient use of existing resources, while ensuring the safe management of increasingly frequent and complex in-country operations.

75. In that regard, UNSMIL has submitted a request for a commitment authority of approximately $10 million as a means to secure the required resources. However, to ensure that these efforts continue, the Mission will require a significant increase in resources and logistical support as the return to Libya gathers pace.

76. A planning process has been initiated, in coordination with United Nations Headquarters, to facilitate the swift implementation of the recommendations of the needs assessment mission and support the next phase of United Nations engagement in Libya for both UNSMIL and the United Nations humanitarian and country teams. That process will play a critical role in ensuring a coordinated approach and secure the resources and support required to facilitate the Mission's work in the critical period ahead.

77. The key objective for the United Nations in Libya continues to be to successfully conclude the democratic transition process through the implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement. Against the evolving political and security backdrop in Libya, UNSMIL will continue to review the assistance that it must provide within the framework of its mandate, particularly with respect to the political process and security arrangements. A longer-term vision will also need to be factored in, with a focus on national reconciliation and conflict prevention as well as an increased focus on support for security arrangements, specifically efforts to advise on, support and coordinate assistance on security for the Libyan authorities. That vision will also need to take into account support for key institutions, including the High Commission for National Elections and the Constitution Drafting Assembly. Furthermore, given the deteriorating human rights and humanitarian situations, UNSMIL should continue its work in human rights monitoring and reporting and in coordinating international humanitarian and development assistance.

78. To continue to effectively address the specific needs in Libya, there may be a requirement to adjust elements of the mandate in consultation with the Libyan authorities. Potential changes to the mandate may also necessitate modifications to the current organizational and staffing structure of UNSMIL. To that end, I will continue to keep the Security Council informed as UNSMIL moves forward with its re-establishment in Libya and with the assessment of its support for the next phase of the country's democratic transition.

VI. Observations and recommendations

79. Despite the progress made in the implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement, there remain serious political and security challenges impeding its full implementation. This notwithstanding, Libya's leaders are reminded that the Agreement that they signed up to five months ago remains the only available framework for ending the conflict and bringing peace to Libya, while also offering a viable road map for managing the remainder of the transitional period. The task of carrying the political process forward must therefore rest primarily with the leaders of Libya. I encourage them to display the same spirit of determination, courage and goodwill that they showed over the course of the political dialogue process in order to facilitate the full and unconditional implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement.

80. In that regard, I urge all institutions emanating from the Libyan Political Agreement to take immediate steps to fulfil their respective obligations as outlined in the Agreement, and within the timelines specified. Only by upholding the higher national interests of Libya through a spirit of inclusivity and reconciliation can there be any viable hope for successful implementation of the Agreement and for a transition period in which immediate challenges can be addressed effectively and the process of building a modern, democratic State anchored in the rule of law and respect for human rights can be started.

81. The peaceful entry of the Presidency Council into Tripoli and the welcome it has since received are indicative of the strong desire among the Libyan people for peace and stability, and for progress towards ending the state of political and institutional division that has wreaked havoc on the Libyan State. The Libyan people expect and demand that the new authorities move quickly to deliver meaningful progress with respect to the provision of security, institution-building and reform, as well as service delivery. It is imperative, therefore, that the Presidency Council reach out to all relevant political and security actors and expedite efforts to create an enabling environment that will allow it to assume its responsibilities, in accordance with the Libyan Political Agreement.

82. As with previous administrations, a key challenge facing the new transitional authorities in Libya is the urgent need to address the widespread proliferation of weapons and the large number of armed groups. Although nominally under State authority, the majority of these groups continue to operate outside the effective control of the Libyan State and Government. It is critical that the Libyan authorities put in place a viable plan that paves the way for the State to gradually exercise an unqualified monopoly over the use of force as outlined in the relevant provisions of the Libyan Political Agreement. This includes the development of professional State security institutions, the successful demobilization and integration or reintegration of fighters, and the implementation of effective defence and police reform programmes. I am grateful to Member States for continuing to abide by relevant Security Council resolutions on the arms embargo in Libya and to refrain from contributing to the armed hostilities, which could seriously derail progress on the political front and undermine the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord.

83. I remain deeply alarmed by the threat that extremist and terrorist groups, foremost among them ISIL, continue to pose to Libya and the region. The reporting period witnessed ongoing efforts by ISIL to consolidate its presence in Libya,

benefiting from the existing political and institutional divisions of the past two years, as well as from weak border controls and the network of terrorist groups operating in countries neighbouring Libya and the wider region. Repeated attempts by ISIL to make incursions into the oil crescent area during the reporting period must serve as a reminder of the need for immediate, collective action by the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord to lead efforts to combat and eliminate that threat. The United Nations and the international community stand ready and committed to assist the Libyan authorities in the fight against these terrorist groups, whose guiding force is to propagate a culture of extremism, violence and destruction.

84. While welcoming the progress made in the fight against terrorist groups in Benghazi, Derna and Sabrathah, I note with alarm the potential for armed hostilities between military actors as a consequence of the absence of a unified military command and structure. In that regard, the strong, political commitment of the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord, along with a united and coordinated approach on the part of the international community, will provide the best chance of preventing full-scale armed conflict in Libya, restoring public security nationwide and combating terrorism.

85. I am particularly concerned about civilian casualties resulting from the ongoing conflict in the country, and reports of targeted attacks on civilian infrastructure, including hospitals. It is the responsibility of the parties engaged in the conduct of hostilities to put in place all the measures necessary to avoid the loss of civilian lives and prevent civilian injuries and damage to civilian installations, in particular hospitals and other medical facilities, and to guarantee unimpeded access to humanitarian assistance wherever needed.

86. I also call on all parties to take decisive steps to end all forms of abduction on account of tribal, family or political affiliations, and to facilitate the immediate and unconditional release of anyone held on those grounds, while ensuring the humane treatment of persons deprived of their liberty. I also urge the Libyan authorities to move quickly and decisively to undertake a judicial screening of all current detainees so that those held illegally can be released and others brought to trial in fair proceedings. The authority to arrest, interrogate and detain must be withdrawn from armed groups in line with relevant provisions of the Libyan Political Agreement.

87. Violence and insecurity continue to have a devastating impact on the lives of conflict-affected people inside Libya. Recent movements of internally displaced persons attempting to return to their homes have exposed returnees to the risk posed by explosive remnants of war, particularly in the highly contaminated Benghazi area. Funding for programmes that address those risks remains vastly inadequate. I therefore urge the international community to contribute to the Libya Humanitarian Response Plan, which provides a framework to immediately alleviate the plight of millions of people in need of assistance in Libya.

88. The ever-growing flow of migrants and refugees embarking on the dangerous journey across the Mediterranean Sea from Libya to Europe is a reminder of the urgent need to do more to prevent the unnecessary loss of life at sea and improve the living conditions of migrants in Libya, many of whom are kept in overcrowded and understaffed reception centres. Immediate action is needed on the part of the

Libyan authorities and the international community to bring to justice smugglers and traffickers of people and support humanitarian protection programmes in Libya.

89. To sustain the current political momentum, it is critical that UNSMIL be provided with the resources necessary to permit its full re-establishment in the Libyan capital and beyond. At its core, the approach of the United Nations family in Libya must be driven by the needs and priorities of the Government of National Accord and, as a first step, the institutionalization of its authority in Tripoli. As that takes shape, the overall concept for the United Nations going forward should be one of responsiveness and flexibility. In line with that approach, I count on Member States to continue to provide UNSMIL with the necessary financial, logistical and security resources.

90. To that end, I recommend that the Security Council renew the mandate of UNSMIL for a period of six months as an integrated special political mission in the areas provided for by the Security Council in its resolutions 2238 (2015) and 2273 (2016). That period will allow UNSMIL to continue to support the authorities as they establish themselves in the country and provide an opportunity to engage with them on their priorities for international assistance. It will also allow for the development of a longer-term vision of United Nations support and engagement in the political transition process of Libya and the continued efforts of UNSMIL to re-establish its presence in Libya.

91. I would like to express my gratitude for the strong support that regional organizations and Member States have provided to the efforts of the United Nations in Libya to implement the Libyan Political Agreement. I also wish to extend my sincere appreciation to the staff of UNSMIL and the United Nations system for their efforts in this critical phase, and I commend my Special Representative, Martin Kobler, for his leadership and tireless efforts to support the Libyans in restarting their democratic transition.